

across the Southeast. Hard work, in a lot of cases it was dirty work, but it was honorable work, and it made a difference in people's lives.

The National Textile Center, or NTC, as you have already heard, really is a national initiative. It's not a localized project. It's a project that has already made a difference. It will continue to make a difference. And as you have heard, it's a consortium of eight leading textile research universities. One of those is in my State. Actually one of the universities happens to be in my district, an outstanding university, North Carolina State University. But each of these States making a contribution, or the universities in these States. They're working to advance every aspect of the textile industry, from fiber production to marketing, through research, education, and, more importantly, industrial partnerships.

That's the kind of thing we ought to be promoting here. We ought to be about getting people to work together. That's what this is about. Yet we have an amendment that says, no, we don't want you to work together. We'd just as soon you have those silos. We argue on this floor daily about knocking down silos and getting people to work together.

The National Textile Center was established really to achieve that one goal, but three others:

It was to develop new materials, innovative and improved manufacturing procedures and integrated systems essential to the success of a modern fiber, fabric and fabricated products manufacturing enterprise.

Secondly, to provide trained personnel. It's important today as the industry changes to have people who can affect the new industry, because it is a high-tech industry today, and to develop those industrial partnerships and technology transfer mechanisms.

And, finally, to strengthen the Nation's textile research and education efforts.

Just yesterday I had a large manufacturer of textiles in my office. Twenty-four plants. He closed one in the western part of North Carolina. Now, for some people that might not make a difference, but for about 300 people that lost their jobs, that's trauma. Their lives have been changed. This is a way we can help that situation. We've lost our shoe industry overseas. Much of our textiles have gone. We are now about trying to reclaim some of it.

Now in its 14th year of activity, the center has made numerous contributions to its constituents, helping to keep the textile industry economically viable by providing a knowledge-based, competitive, cutting-edge opportunity. It enjoys widespread industry support and a partnership across the States.

As has been stated already, this industry is still alive. Six hundred thousand workers in America are still employed in the textile industry, contributing nearly \$60 billion to the national gross domestic product on an annual

basis. Research has already provided, as you have heard, uniforms and opportunities for our first responders. They're in the process in a broader sense of creating fabrics that are self-decontaminating to protect against biological and chemical hazards.

These are things we ought to be doing. And, yes, we ought to be doing them in a way that we work together so that at multiple universities and the bright minds we have across this country today can work together to make a difference.

I oppose the gentleman's amendment, and I ask this body to defeat it resoundingly.

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Alabama is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to oppose the amendment, and I'm sure that my friend and colleague from Arizona means well in this endeavor. But I must say that I support the National Textile Center.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, our domestic textile manufacturers are facing tremendous competition from around the world, and much of that is due to the way that our trade laws in this country are structured. And it's not the fault of our domestic manufacturers. The only way we can remain competitive against cheap labor in these foreign countries is through cutting-edge technology.

The National Textile Center strengthens our Nation's efforts by bringing together diverse research and also those in the industry so that our textile producers can produce to lead the world in technology. So the end results, therefore, will be workers in the United States can continue to produce the highest-quality products and in the most efficient manner.

This center that we're discussing today, the National Textile Center, provides real-world applications that are needed to make sure that the textile industry in America survives. For that reason, Mr. Chairman, I rise to support this center and to oppose the amendment that is being offered before us at this time.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. While I am opposed to the gentleman's amendment, I would like to yield him time because there have been a number of other speakers.

Mr. FLAKE. I thank the gentleman for yielding. I'll be very brief.

One of the gentlemen mentioned that we in Congress simply shouldn't let the Federal Government spend this money. The last time I checked, we are the Federal Government. We're one branch of it, and it's our job to appropriate money to another; that is, to actually spend that money. We don't spend that money here. We don't write the checks.

That's done by the Federal agencies. Our role is to provide oversight and to authorize the programs.

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And so I'm not advocating at all that we step back. I'm advocating that we actually go to the time-honored practice of authorization, appropriation, and oversight. And that allows us to actually go into these Federal agencies and really provide good oversight.

But I can tell you, it's very difficult to provide oversight for example for the Defense bill. Last year or the year before, I believe, we provided an earmark in the Defense bill for a museum in New York, in the Defense bill.

How can you provide good oversight with any straight face, go to the Defense Department and say, we think that you should have spent more money on body armor for our troops in Iraq. Oh, but by the way, we directed you to spend \$2 million on a museum in New York. It just doesn't seem right to me. And so I think, frankly, we cheapen our role when we, the contemporary practice of earmarking, I think, has cheapened the role of Congress and moved us away from authorization, appropriation, and oversight. So that will be my response, and I would urge support for the amendment.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. I move to strike the last word.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from West Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The gentleman alludes to the Defense Department. He could save a lot more than \$2 million for the United States Government if he turned his attention to the Defense Department and some of the contracting activities that are certainly going on in Iraq. And perhaps that's something he will want to look at.

But let me say with regard to the textile-designated funding in this bill, I don't know a project that has actually had more scrutiny, or more broad-based support than this project. And in a time when our industries are competing internationally, the textile industry is particularly under siege around the world. This initiative has probably saved the textile industry that continues to struggle to exist in this country. To the extent that this program has been able to save it, the research and development that has come out of the textile industry's research can largely take credit for that.

I want to commend the Members who represent these areas. And it's not one area. It's not two areas. There are eight universities involved in this, focusing on this and being ahead of the problem enough in order to be able to fund, promote, and facilitate the research that has allowed the textile industry to be as competitive as it is around the world. It is only research, it is only new discoveries, it is only new materials, new ways of manufacturing